

The Kuei Yang Sect (Ikyo Zen)

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(The founders of this sect were Master Ling Yu of Kuei Shan mountain and his disciple Hui chi of Yang Shan mountain. In deference to them they were called after their mountains.)

Master Hui Chi of Yang Shan Mountain in Yuan Chou District

(From The Transmission of the Lamp - Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu)

Ch' an master Hui Chi of Yang Shan mountain in Yuan Chou district was a native of Huai Hai in Shao Chou district. His lay surname was Yeh. At the age of fifteen, he intended to leave home but was prevented by his parents. Two years later, he cut off two of his fingers and prostrated himself before his parents, swearing that he would go in search of the right Dharma to pay the debt of gratitude which he owed them.

Subsequently, he followed ch'an Master Tung of Nan Hua monastery¹ who shaved his head. Before his ordination, he started his travels (to study under other masters). First he called on (Ch'an master) Tan Yuan and was awakened to the profound doctrine. Later he went to Kuei Shan mountain where he succeeded in understanding the abstruse (truth). (Master) Ling Yu asked him, 'Are you a monk with or without an owner?' Hui Chi replied, 'I have an owner.' Ling Yu asked him, 'Where is he?' Hui Chi crossed the hall from west to east and stood there.'² Ling Yu saw that this disciple was not an ordinary man and subsequently gave him the appropriate teaching. Hui Chi asked, 'Where is the abode of the real Buddha?' Ling Yu replied, 'Turn inwards the subtlety of your thoughtless thinking to think of the boundless spiritual brightness until your thinking is exhausted, then return it to its source (where) the fundamental nature and its phenomenal expressions eternally abide, where activity and principle are not a dualism and where is the suchness of the real Buddha.' Upon hearing this, Hui Chi was instantaneously enlightened. He then (stayed at the monastery to) wait upon Ling Yu.

Later, he went to Chiang Ling for his ordination and spent the summer retreat studying the Vinaya Pitaka.³ He then called on (Ch'an master)

1. The monastery of the Sixth Patriarch, formerly called Pao Lin monastery.

2. West is a symbol of imperturbability, or body and east of activity, its function. Hui Chi crossed the hall to show the owner who was free to come and go.

3. One of the three divisions of Buddhist canon, teaching discipline and monastic rules.

Yen T'ou. (On seeing him) Yen T'ou held up his dust-whisk and Hui Chi spread out his cloth mat. Yen T'ou hid his dust-whisk behind his back and Hui Chi picked up his mat, put it over his shoulder and went out. Yen T'ou said, 'I do not agree with your spreading the mat, I only agree with your taking it back.'¹

Yang Shan asked (Ch'an master) Shih Shih, 'What is the difference between Buddha and Tao?'² Shih Shih replied, "Tao is like an open hand and Buddha like a fist.'³ When he left Shih Shih, the latter escorted him to the door, saying: 'Do not leave for ever this time as you will have to return to me later.'⁴

(A man named) Wei Chou asked Ling Yu to write a gatha for him. The master replied, 'Its reciprocal disclosure by two people when face to face immediately shows stupidity; how can it be expressed in ink

on paper?'⁵ The man then made the same request to Hui Chi who drew a circle on a sheet of paper and wrote, 'To know it after thinking of it is second rate; to know it without thinking of it is third rate.'

1. The dust-whisk consisted of a handle with a bundle of long horse-hair tied to one end and a ring at the other for hanging it on the wall. A cloth mat, or nisidana in Sanskrit is a cloth for sitting on. Yen T'ou probed the visitor's understanding by raising his dust-whisk, thus showing the active function of his spiritual body. In response Yang Shan spread out his mat, also showing his own performance of his spiritual function. When Yen T'ou hid the dust-whisk behind his back, he meant that his activity or function had returned to rest in his spiritual body. Likewise Yang Shan's act of taking back the mat and putting it over his shoulder meant the same thing. Yen T'ou approved of Yang Shan picking up the mat, because immediately afterwards Yang Shan went out, this complementary act meaning the complete return of function to rest in the spiritual body. He did not approve of Yang Shan spreading out the mat because the act was incomplete. Had Yang Shan spread the cloth and then bowed upon his knees on it or advanced a step forward to stand on it, his performance of function would have been complete. In the present case, his function was only half performed.

2. Tao, or the Way, Truth, Doctrine.

3. An open hand represents activity or function while a closed fist is the still body.

4. This phrase should not be interpreted literally, as to do so would be to cling to what the masters call the 'dead meaning'. Its 'living meaning' is, 'Do not return to the stillness of your spiritual body for ever, because you will have to perform its function for the welfare of others, as I am now doing here.'

5. 'It' here is the inexpressible immaterial body. To try to disclose the nameless body when one meets another man, is to show stupidity; how can the inexpressible reality be expressed in ink on a sheet of paper?

6. A circle symbolizes eternal body. The mere knowledge of it without experiential realization has no value, hence the second and third rates. Knowledge of It after prior thinking about it is better than knowledge without prior thinking of it, because in the former there is at least the act of thinking, which is function in its dimness whereas in the latter there are no traces of function.

One day, as Hui Chih was following Kuei Shan to work in the fields, he said, 'So low here and so high there!' Ling Yu replied, 'Water can level things.' He said, 'Even water cannot be relied upon, Venerable Sir; let the high level itself down and the low level itself up.' Ling Yu (nodded) his approval.¹

A patron² (of the monastery) sent a gift of thin material for making robes (to Kuei Shan). Yang Shan asked his master, 'The Venerable Sir is receiving so much from the almsgiver; how is he going to requite it all?' (To show him how to repay the gift), Ling Yu knocked the Ch'an (meditation) bed.³ Yang Shan said, 'How can the Venerable Sir convert common property to his private use?'⁴

(One day), Ling Yu suddenly asked Yang Shan, 'Where are you from?' The latter replied, 'From the fields.' Ling Yu asked, 'How many people were there in the fields?' Yang Shan stuck his mattock into the ground and stood (still). Ling Yu said, 'Today, on Nan Shan (South Mountain) many people are cutting the grass.' Thereupon, Yang Shan took up his mattock and left.⁵

1. This dialogue shows that Yang Shan had made rapid progress in dialectics. He compared the unevenness of body and function with that of the ground, and his master said that water, or self-nature, could equalize both. Yang Shan said that the self-nature could not be relied upon before one's enlightenment and that if one was already enlightened, there would be no need of evening up body and function; It would suffice to let one's body and function adjust themselves by means of Ch'an training.

2. Danapati in Sanskrit, an almsgiver, a patron who supports a monastery.

3. The act of knocking the meditation bed was performance of Kuei Shan's great function of direct pointing at the mind so that the patron could realize his nature. This is the best way of repaying a debt, because the Buddha said that unsurpassed Dana consisted in bestowing the Buddha Dharma upon others.

4. Yang Shan jokingly said that his master should not use the meditation bed which was common property to repay his private debt for the gift received, This is the 'dead meaning' of the sentence, but its 'living meaning' is, 'You have performed your great function by knocking the bed; now let me perform mine by speaking these words.'

5. In spite of the presence of many people in the fields, there was no one really there since they were but illusions of the deluded mind. In reply to his master, Yang Shan stuck the mattock into the ground to show that all things were returnable to the one mind which stood still, symbolizing the Dharmakaya in its samadhi or imperturbability; this was function returning to the eternal body. Kuei Shan's remark, 'Today, on South Mountain, many people are cutting grass' meant that the immaterial body is everywhere and all-embracing, including South Mountain, and is performing its great function. Yang Shan took up the mattock to show the great function, and left, to show his disappearance from the scene, or the return of function to body, thus discontinuing the dialogue which had served its useful purpose. Readers will see that Kuei Shan did not miss a single chance to train his disciple so that the latter could succeed him later.

Yang Shan was tending cattle on Kuei Shan mountain. The leader of the community (who was there also), said, 'There are hundreds of millions of hairs, with hundreds of millions of lions in them.' Yang Shan did not comment and when he returned (to the monastery), he waited on Kuei Shan. Later, the leader came in and paid obeisance to the latter. Yang Shan referred to what the leader had said outside and asked him, 'Was it not you who just said, "There are hundreds of millions of hairs, with hundreds of millions of lions in them"?' The leader replied, 'Yes.' Yang Shan asked, 'At the time of their appearance, did the lions come before or after the hairs?' The leader replied, 'Their appearance was neither before nor after (the hairs).' Thereupon, Yang Shan left (the room). Ling Yu remarked, 'The lion has broken its back.'¹

(In the hall), after Kuei Shan had ascended his seat, he raised a dust-whisk and said, 'He who is able to act in accord with the truth, will be given this whisk.' Yang Shan asked, 'I can act in accord with the truth, will I get it?' The leader said, 'Just act according to the truth and you will surely have it.' Yang Shan snatched the whisk (from Kuei Shan's hand) and took it away.'²

One day, as it was raining, the leader (of the community) said, 'Good rain, Venerable Sir.' Yang Shan asked, 'How is it good?' As the leader could not reply, Yang Shan said, 'I can answer the question.' The leader asked Yang Shan, 'How is it good?' Yang Shan pointed (with his finger) to the rain.'³

As Kuei Shan and Yang Shan were strolling together outside, a crow

1. At the sight of the cattle, the leader referred to their hairs. Hairs symbolize deluded men because they are light and thin and are blown in all directions by the wind, like men who blindly follow worldly currents. In spite of their delusion worldly men fundamentally do not differ from the Buddha who is symbolized by a fearless lion. So, by their fundamental nature, myriads of deluded men are but Buddhas. Yang Shan wanted to probe the spiritual capacity of the leader and asked him whether the eternal nature of men came before or after the hairs. The leader was correct because his reply wiped out all traces of time. When Yang Shan posed the question, he performed his great function by setting a trap to catch the leader, but since the latter was correct, Yang Shan left, his act of leaving meaning the return of function to the still body. Kuei Shan jokingly observed that Yang Shan, a lion, had broken his back that is he had been defeated by the leader.

2. To act in accord with the truth, in other words, to reveal one's Dharmakaya by means of its great function. Yang Shan performed this great function when he snatched the dust-whisk to reveal his Dharmakaya which actually performed it. After this act, he went away, to show the stilling of function.

3. Rain is good because it causes the activated potentiality to perform its function of seeing. The leader was unenlightened and Yang Shan taught him to perceive that which pointed to the rain, i.e. that which performed its benefiting function to enlighten the questioner.

flying past with a red persimmon in its beak, dropped the fruit in front of them. Ling Yu picked it up and passed it to Yang Shan who, after washing the fruit in water, returned it to his master. Ling Yu asked, 'How do you get it?' Yang Shan replied, 'This is the reward for your great virtues.' Ling Yu said, 'You should not be empty handed (and deprived of your share)'. He then gave half of the fruit to Yang Shan.'¹

When Yang Shan was washing his robe, Tan Yuan asked him, 'At this moment, what should one do.' Yang Shan replied, 'At this moment, where can it be seen?'²

The master stayed on Kuei Shan mountain for fifteen years and his sayings were admired by all the students there. After receiving Kuei Shan's esoteric (mind-) sealing, he led his disciples to Wang Mang mountain where he stayed to convert all comers. Due to the absence of favourable conditions³ there, he moved to Yang Shan mountain where pupils came in great numbers.

In the hall, the master said to the assembly, 'All of you should turn the light inwards on yourselves; do not memorize my words. Since time without beginning, you have turned your back on the light and have cast yourselves into darkness. Your false thinking is so deep-rooted that it cannot be dissipated in an instant. For this reason, expedient methods are used to strip you of your coarse conceptions. This is like giving yellow leaves to children⁴ but is there any truth in all this? It is also like a man who opens a shop to sell all kinds of goods including gold and jade, and whose object is to determine the potentialities of his customers. For this reason, Shih T'ou is said to be a shopkeeper selling real gold. But I sell all and sundry; if a buyer wants rat's excrement, I will sell him rat's excrement, and if he wants real gold, I will sell him real gold.'⁵

A monk asked: 'I do not want rat's excrement; will the Venerable Sir

1. Master and disciple praised each other for their enlightenment. Readers will notice the great function performed by both Kuei Shan and Yang Shan when passing the fruit to each other.

2. Tan Yuan's question means, 'At this instant, how should one act to be in accord with reality?' Tan Yuan wanted to probe Yang Shan who replied that reality could not be seen.

3. Literally; due to the lack of a concurrent cause.

4. The Buddha compared the expedient teaching by means of sutras to yellow leaves given to crying children to make them believe that they were being given real gold so that they would stop screaming, for reality cannot be taught by words and speeches.

5. Unlike Shih T'ou who received only people of high spirituality, Yang Shan received all comers of different potentialities.

give me real gold.' The master replied, 'If you think (first) and then open your mouth to ask (about it), you will never understand it even if you wait until the year of the donkey.'¹ The monk remained silent and the master continued, 'There will be business if there is enquiry and there will be no business if there is no enquiry.'² If I have to expound Ch'an there will be no one to keep me company, still less a following of five hundred or seven hundred men. If I talk about east and west, people will struggle forward to catch (my words); I will be likened to one showing an empty fist to deceive children who will find nothing inside it. Now I tell you plainly; do not set your mind on the saintly; just direct it on your own immaterial nature,³ and cultivate reality. Do not look for the three insights and six powers.⁴ Why not? Because they are all saintly twigs. Now, just know (recognize or identify yourself with) your mind to attain the fundamental. Get at the root but do not worry about twigs, and later on, one day, you will be self-provided with them all. If you do not get the fundamental, you will simply fail (in your quest) in spite of your studies because of your feelings (and discriminations). Have you not heard the Venerable Kuei Shan's saying, "When all feelings about the saintly and the profane have been wiped out, there will be exposed the body of true eternity in which the absolute and relative will not be a dualism and which will be just the Bhutatathata Buddha"?'⁵

(When a monk) asked 'What was the Patriarch's idea?' the master, with his hand, drew in the air a circle within which he wrote the character 'Fu' (Buddha). The monk kept silent.⁶

1. In China, an animal is chosen as a symbol for each lunar year; as a donkey is not one of them its year will never come round.

2. If anyone is keen to learn and ask questions, I will teach him, but if no one is keen to learn, there will be 'no business'.

3. Lit. ocean of the Bhutatathata, the all-containing, immaterial nature of Dharmakaya.

4. The three insights are; (1) insight into the mortal conditions of self and others in previous lives, (2) spiritual insight into future mortal conditions and (3) nirvana insight, i.e. into present mortal sufferings so as to overcome all passions or temptations. The six powers, or sadabhijna in Sanskrit, are: (1) divyacaksus, deva-vision, instantaneous view of anything anywhere in the realm of form; (2) divyasrotra, ability to hear any sound anywhere; (3) paracitta-jnana, ability to know the thoughts of all other minds; (4) purvanivasanusmrti-jnana, knowledge of all former existences of self and others; (5) rddhi-saksatkriya, power to be anywhere or do anything at will, and (6) asravaksaya-jnana, supernatural consciousness of the waning of vicious propensities.

5. When all feelings, i.e. dualisms have been wiped out by their integration into the one mind, the real body of true eternity will reveal itself and will be but the suchness of Buddha.

6. A circle symbolises eternity, and 'fu' means 'enlightened one'. The monk was ignorant.

The master asked the leader (of the community), 'Do not think of either good or evil; at this very moment, how would you act?' The leader replied, 'This very moment is when my bodily life should be at rest.' The master said, 'Why do not you ask this old monk?' The monk said, 'At this very instant, (even) the Venerable Sir is not perceptible.' The master declared, 'You are not fit to carry on my teaching.'¹

The master returned to Kuei Shan mountain to visit Ling Yu who asked him, 'You are now regarded as an enlightened teacher; when students come from all quarters, how do you distinguish between those who know that 'there is' and those who do not know that 'there is';² between those who are inheritors (of Dharma) from (enlightened) masters and those who are not inheritors: and between (those who are of) the Teaching School and those of the Absolute Sect?³ Try to say something (for me) to see.' Yang Shan replied, 'I had (some) experience of this; when I saw monks coming from all quarters, I raised my dust-whisk and asked them, "In your places, is this one expounded or not?" I again asked them, "Apart from this one, what have the elder masters been doing in your

1. Yang Shan wanted to teach the leader but the latter did not understand him. The master's question was full of meaning and was, 'When you have put an end to good and evil, i.e. to all dual conceptions, how should you act to be in accord with the truth.' The leader wrongly replied that his present bodily life which he held dear, should rest in this stillness of mind. This is tantamount to sitting on the top of a hundred-foot pole as mentioned by Master Hsu Yun in his discourses or to the laziness of the monk who refused to leap forward after attaining the stillness of mind and whose hut, donated by an old lady, was burned down by the angry donor. (See Series One - The Ch'an Training.) The master continued to teach the monk and said to him, 'Why do not you ask me the same question?' In dialogues between master and disciple, a master often said to his pupil, 'Ask me the same question and I will reply to it.' This is direct pointing at the mind, because 'You ask' and 'I reply' invariably reveals that which asks and that which replies, i.e. 'you' and 'I', or your self-nature and my self-nature which actually do the talking, or perform their functions. Many a disciple attained enlightenment after this simple question and answer. The leader gave the silly reply, 'At this very instant, even the Venerable Sir is not seen', thus missing the point. Hence the master's declaration of the leader's inability to inherit his Dharma.

2. 'One who knows that there is' is Ch'an idiom meaning one who knows that the Buddha-nature is inherent in every being. All masters avoid the use of specific names, such as Buddha-nature, self-nature, etc., because they are apprehensive that their disciples will cling to empty names and will never realize the truth. The rendering of these Ch'an terms into English is a real headache for translators.

3. Lit. the teaching of meaning and of the absolute or abstruse, i.e. the sutra Teaching School and the Ch'an Sect. Although Yang Shan was already an enlightened teacher, his old master still wanted to make sure that his successor in the Dharma was really competent to teach his Dharma to others. Kuei Shan was keen to assure the perpetuity of his Sect.

places?" Ling Yu praised the master and said, 'From olden times this has always been the Sect's tooth and nail.'¹

Ling Yu asked the master, 'In the vast expanse of their basic conscious-

ness² living beings on the great earth are deprived of the fundamental on which to lay hold; how do you know that these monks have or have not (that fundamental nature)?' The master replied, 'I have had experience of this (also).' It happened that a monk was just passing in front of the master who called out, 'Venerable Sir!' As the monk turned his head, the master said to Ling Yu, 'Venerable Sir, this is one who has no fundamental on which to lay hold in the vast expanse of his basic consciousness.' (Praising his disciple) Ling Yu said, 'This is just one drop of lion's milk that can disintegrate six bushels of donkey's milk.'³

Chancellor Cheng Yu asked the master, '(It is said that) one can enter nirvana without putting an end to distress (klesa). How is this done?' The master raised his dust-whisk and the chancellor said, 'The word "entering" can be omitted.' The master replied, 'The word "entering" is not for the (Honourable) Chancellor.'⁴

1. The act of raising the dust-whisk is the performance of great function to show that which raises it. Yang Shan meant, 'At your monasteries, do your masters directly point at the mind to teach you how to realize your self-nature and attain Buddhahood?' 'This one' in Ch'an indicates that which raises the dust-whisk but not the whisk itself. The second question, 'What have the old masters been doing?' means what have been their activities, or performance of function in accordance with the transmission of mind, to enlighten their disciples. Kuei Shan praised Yang Shan for his use of all the best devices of the Sect to receive and guide visiting monks, because his method was the direct pointing at the mind as taught by Bodhidharma.

2. Lit. Karmic consciousness, the original thought which caused the wheel of life to turn. The mind was stirred by the first thought of activity due to basic ignorance. The Awakening of Faith attributes it to unawareness of the mind's activity due to ignorance. Consciousness is the opposite of wisdom.

3. The master called the passing monk to see if the latter's inherent potentiality could be aroused to the point of laying hold of his fundamental nature in the darkness of ignorance. As the monk was still using his consciousness, he turned his head to see who called him, and the master said to Ling Yu, 'This is one who cannot, in the extensiveness of ignorance, lay hold of his fundamental nature. - Lion's milk is like Bodhi enlightenment which is able to wipe out ignorance, just as one drop of lion's milk can disintegrate six bushels of donkey's milk. This analogy is the Buddha's equivalent to Christ's camel passing through the eye of a needle. Thus Ling Yu praised his disciple's function which could disintegrate ignorance.

4. Klesa is anxiety, worry, trouble and whatever causes them. The chancellor quoted from the Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra this sentence which means that nirvana and klesa are of the same underlying nature which is non-dual. The master raised his dust-whisk to show that cognizance of that which performed the great function could ensure outright entry into nirvana. The chancellor observed that if nirvana was everywhere, the word 'entering' could be omitted. The master meant, 'Why discriminate about that word, for your discrimination will prevent you from entering nirvana?'

The master asked a monk, 'Where do you come from?' The monk replied, 'Yu Chou.' The master said, 'I would like some news from Yu Chou; what is the price of rice there?' The monk replied, 'When I left, I unintentionally passed through the market place, stepped on a bridge and broke it.' Thereupon, the master stopped (talking).¹

When the master saw (another) monk, he raised a dust-whisk. (Seeing this), the monk shouted. The master asked him, 'shouts are not unused, but where is this old monk's fault?' The monk replied, 'Venerable Sir, it is not proper to teach the objective to others.' Thereupon the master struck the monk.²

The master asked Hsiang Yen, 'Young brother, what is your latest view?' Hsiang Yen replied, 'I am really unable to talk about it', and then chanted the following gatha:

*'Last year my poverty was not poor enough,
But this year it is real. Last year I was poor
And did not own a spot (of ground) in which to stick my awl,
But this year I am really poor for I do not even own an awl.'*³

1. The master probed the monk by asking him about the price of rice at Yu Chou to see if the latter's mind still clung to a place. A mind clinging to a place is impure for a pure mind is omnipresent and is free from the ideas of location and direction

as taught by Huang Po. (See Huang Po's Transmission of Mind.) The monk replied that he unintentionally stepped on and broke a bridge at Yu Chou, thus cutting all links with that place. The bridge here is the one referred to in Upasaka Fu Ta Shih's gatha of which the two last lines read:

*A man is crossing a bridge;
The bridge but not the water flows.*

The man is Lin Chi's man of no position or true personality, the bridge is the changing phenomenal and water, the unchanging self-nature. The monk probably quoted the bridge from the above gatha, and since he gave a correct reply, the master stopped the conversation or 'returned' his enlightening 'function' to his still 'body'.

2. Shouts are used in Ch'an teaching and will be dealt with in the next chapter on the Lin Chi Sect. An object is the opposite of the subjective mind and the monk wrongly blamed the master for showing a dust-whisk, or object, instead of directly pointing at the subjective mind. As the monk did not see that which raised the whisk or the subject and still clung to the whisk or an object (this being tantamount to looking at the finger instead of at the moon which is actually pointed at), the master struck him, probably with the whisk or a staff, to show him again the subject which actually performed the function of beating him.

3. Hsiang Yen was also Kuei Shan's disciple and was Yang Shan's younger Dharma brother. 'Latest view' means up-to-date achievement in Ch'an training. The third line of the above gatha differs slightly from that in The Imperial Selections of Ch'an Sayings (Yu Hsuan Yu Lu), but the meaning of the whole gatha is the same in both collections. (See Ch'an Master Chi Hsien of Hsiang Yen in Series One.) The gatha shows Hsiang Yen's gradual elimination of his remnant feelings and discerning as taught in the sutras, e.g. The Diamond Sutra (See Series One: The Diamond Cutter of Doubts).

The master said, 'You have only realized the Tathagata's Ch'an and not the Patriarch's Ch'an.'¹

Kuei Shan sent the master a parcel containing a mirror. When he went to the hall, the master held up the mirror and said to the assembly, 'Please say whether this is Kuei Shan's or Yang Shan's mirror. If someone can give a correct reply, I will not smash it.' As no one answered, the master smashed the mirror.²

The master asked Shuang Feng, 'Young brother, what is your latest view?' Shuang Feng replied, 'My view is that there is not a matchable thing.' The master said, 'Yours is the interpretation of the objective.' Shuang Feng asked, 'Mine being such, what is the elder brother's?' The master replied, 'Do not you know that which no thing (dharma) can match?' When Kuei Shan heard of the dialogue, he said, 'Hui Chi's sentence puzzles and kills men all over the world.'³

1. The Tathagata's Ch'an is the successful application of the teaching in the sutras and is, therefore, not complete achievement. The Patriarch's Ch'an is experiential realization after the arousal of the latent potentiality inherent in men for integrating both underlying law and appearances, i.e. subject and object, into an undivided self-nature.

2. The master wanted to probe the assembly's ability to eliminate all discriminations. As the whole assembly still clung to the conceptions of mirror, Yang Shan mountain and Kuei Shan mountain, the master's act of smashing the mirror was the performance of his great function aiming at wiping out all differentiation, the cause of the split of the undivided self-nature into subject and object and of the turning wheel of life. His act was comparable to that of Kuei Shan when the latter kicked and knocked over the water jug. (See the Story of Master Ling Yu of Kuei Shan mountain, page 59.)

3. Ch'an students all over the country pay unusual attention to this very interesting dialogue. As Master Hsu Yun said in his discourses (see Series One), Ch'an methods have undergone many changes since the Buddha's transmission of Dharma to Mahakasyapa, although fundamentally they remain the same. When Bodhidharma merely said to Hui K'o, 'Show me your mind so that I can quieten it for you', the latter was completely enlightened. In ancient times, when men of high spirituality like Hui K'o, Seng Ts'an, Tao Hsin, Hung Jen, Hui Neng, etc., gradually became rare, enlightened masters were compelled to devise new techniques to receive and enlighten their disciples. So we now come to the new technique of verifying one's view to know whether one's interpretation is from the standpoint of subject or object so that one can correctly apprehend and achieve awakening. When Shuang Feng made his interpretation from the objective standpoint, that is about a dharma or thing that could match with what he wanted to say, Yang Shan corrected his younger Dharma brother's view by his own interpretation from the subjective standpoint, that is the unsurpassed 'that' with which no dharma could match, or the true personality. Yang Shan's correct interpretation was highly praised by his teacher Kuei Shan, for it raised a doubt in the mind of every man all over the country, this doubt being the

most indispensable thing for without it a man would never suspect that he was endowed with great potentiality which could be aroused to the point of absorbing the truth, thus killing the illusory man for the resurrection of the true personality. (See also Han Shan's Diamond Cutter of Doubts - Series One.)

A monk asked the master, 'Does the Dharmakaya expound Dharma?' The master replied, 'I cannot reply but there is another who can.' The monk asked, 'Where is that man who can answer my question?' Thereupon, the master pushed out the pillow. When Kuei Shan heard (the story), he said, 'Hui Chi is now using the edge of his (sharp) sword in his dealings.'¹

The master was sitting with closed eyes when a monk walked silently to his side and stood there. The master opened his eyes and drew on the ground a circle inside which he wrote the word 'water'; then he looked at the monk who remained silent.²

The master was holding a staff when a monk asked him, 'Where did you get it?' The master hid the staff behind him and the monk remained silent.³

The master asked a monk, 'What is your talent?' The monk replied, 'I know divination.' The master raised his dust-whisk and asked, 'To which one of the sixty-four hexagrams (in the Yi Ching) does this belong?' As the monk could not reply, the master said, 'It was the full positive power of thunder but is now the negative destruction of fire.'⁴

1. The Dharmakaya is speechless and does not expound the Dharma. Even the Buddha's Nirmanakaya or transformation body used only expedient methods and words indirectly to expound the true Dharma, inherent in men but inexpressible. Only once did the Buddha directly expound the Dharma, that was when he held up a flower, a great function which Mahakasyapa alone understood. As Yang Shan could neither expound the Dharma nor show him who could, he pushed out the bamboo or clay pillow, because that which pushed it out was one who could expound the Dharma, which was being expounded while the pillow was being pushed. Kuei Shan praised his disciple for his use of the sharp edge of the sword of wisdom to enlighten the visiting monk.

2. The circle symbolizes eternity and water the self-nature; thus the drawing means the eternal nature inherent in every man. The master's act of drawing and of looking at the monk is great function. The monk was unenlightened and kept quiet, for had he been enlightened, he would have done something to reveal his true self.

3. The monk still clung to the idea of existence and the master hid his staff behind him to teach the monk that existence was also non-existence, for existence and non-existence were a dualism which had no nature. The monk did not understand the master's performance of his great function.

4. In the Yi Ching system of divination, the 'eight diagrams' consist of an arrangement of single and divided lines in eight groups of three lines each, of which there are sixty-four combinations or hexagrams, each one having a meaningful name. When the whisk was raised, it symbolized full grown function, but since the function was not understood by the monk, it became but the extinguishing negative fire, i.e. it could not now serve its purpose. Wherever the masters might happen to be, they made use of everything available, even local customs, dialects, divination, religions, beliefs, etc., as materials for teaching their disciples. This note is added to dispel misunderstanding that Yang Shan taught divination, and to contradict fortune-tellers who may use this passage in support of their boasts, for Ch'an does not teach superstition.

The master asked a monk, 'What is your name.' The monk replied, 'Ling Tung.' (Spiritual Pervasion.) The master said, 'Then please enter this lantern.' The monk replied, 'I'm already inside it.'¹

A monk asked the master, 'The ancients said that the sight of form led to the perception of mind. This Ch'an bed is form; please discard the form and show me my mind.' The master asked back, 'show me which one is the Ch'an bed.' The monk did not reply.²

A monk asked the master, 'Who was Vairocana (Buddha)'s teacher?' The master hooted at him. The monk asked 'who is the Venerable Sir's teacher?' The master replied, 'Do not be so impolite.'³

The master was conversing with a monk when another monk said, 'Talking is Manjusri and silence is Vimalakirti.' The master asked the (interrupting) monk, 'Are you not the one who is neither talking nor

silent?' The monk silently nodded and the master asked him, 'Why don't you manifest your supernatural powers?' The monk replied, 'I do not manifest them because I am afraid that you will regard me as of the Teaching School.' The master said, 'From your talk, it can be deduced that you do not possess the "eye" which is outside the Teaching School.' The monk asked, 'What is the distance between paradise and hell?' The master drew a line on the ground with his staff.⁴

When he was staying at Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara) monastery, he posted this notice, 'No questioning when sutras are being read.' Later, when a monk came to the monastery to enquire after the master, he saw the latter was reading a sutra and stood waiting at his side. The master rolled up the sutra and asked the visitor, 'Do you understand?' The monk

1. A lantern symbolizes the light of wisdom. The master meant, 'Recover your wisdom to perform its function for the welfare of others.' The deluded monk clung to the lantern.

2. The master's reply is his performance of function aiming to reveal the mind to the monk.

3. Vairocana is Sakyamuni Buddha's Dharmakaya or spiritual body. The master hooted at the monk to show him that which hooted, in other words he performed its enlightening function or the function of a teacher of Buddhas. The monk was stupid and the master scolded him again.

4. The monk quoted from the Vimalakirti Nirveda Sutra which said that Manjusri talked about the non-dual Dharma whereas Vimalakirti remained silent to make a 'speechless talk' on the same subject. The master meant, 'Are you not the absolute which is neither talking nor silent', because the truth is beyond speech and silence. The 'eye' here is the eye of Ch'an which does not rely on the sutras of the Teaching School for realizing the truth. The straight line means that paradise and hell are the same for fundamentally they do not differ from each other.

replied, 'I do not read the sutra, how can I understand?' The master said, 'You will understand later.'¹

A monk asked the master, 'What is the meaning of the Ch'an Sect's certain entry into the gate to instantaneous enlightenment?' The master replied, 'This (entry) is very difficult; (it is good for) followers of the Patriarchs' Sect who are of superior roots (potentialities) and superior wisdom, and who upon hearing (a sentence) are awakened to the whole truth and thereby attain the Great Dharani² but they are extremely rare. Because most men are of small roots and inferior wisdom, the ancients said that these men would be lost when they reached that stage if quiet meditation was not taught in Ch'an.' The monk asked, 'Apart from that, is not there another expedient method enabling students to enter it?' The master replied, '(If I say) there "is" or there "is not", I will disturb your mind. What is your native place?' The monk replied, 'Yu Chou.' The master asked, 'Do you still think of it?' The monk replied, 'Yes.' The master said, 'At Yu Chou there are houses with storeys, groves and parks and plenty of men and horses. (Now) turn back your thinking to see if there are as many things in that which thinks of them.' The monk replied, 'When I come to this, I do not see all these things any more.' The master said, 'Yours is still the interpretation of objects; this is the faith stage but not the personality stage. According to your interpretation, you realize only one subtle condition and are only qualified for taking a seat and for wearing the robe. Later on, you will realize (the rest) yourself.' The monk bowed his thanks and left.³

After the master had moved from Yang Shan mountain to Kuan Yin temple, he continued to receive and guide visitors of different potentialities and thus set an outstanding example for the Ch'an Sect. A few years before he passed away, he composed the following gatha:

When my years reach seventy-seven

My departure will take place.

1. The monk failed to see the master's function which he performed when he rolled up the sutra and asked his question.
2. Absolute control over good and evil passions and influences.
3. There are three stages: (1) the faith stage, (2) the personality stage and (3) that of no stage. The faith stage is belief that there is not a thing in the real; the personality stage is personal realization of it; and the stage of no stage is the supreme or transcendental stage. One qualified for sitting in meditation and wearing the robe has unquestionable faith and is qualified for advanced training. Subtle conditions will be dealt with in the following chapter on the Lin Chi Sect.

*I will leave it to my (self) nature to float or sink
When I leave with my two hands embracing my folded knees¹*

At his death on Tung Ping mountain in Shao Chou district, he was seventy-seven years old and actually held his folded knees with both hands. The emperor bestowed upon him the posthumous title 'Great Master Chih Tung' ('Wisdom Pervasion') and for his stupa the epigraph 'Miao Kuang' ('Wonderful Light'). Later, the stupa was moved to Yang Shan mountain (for veneration).

(The following passages not mentioned in 'The Transmission of the Lamp' are quoted from the 'Finger Pointing at the Moon':²)

One day, Tan Yuan said to Yang Shan, 'The state master who inherited from the six Patriarchs the Dharma of Ninety-seven Symbols, transmitted it to me, saying, 'After my death, a monk will come from the south and will spread this teaching. I now hand it (this book) to you and you should carry it without allowing its (teaching) to be discontinued.' After saying this, Tan Yuan handed over the book of (Ch' an) symbolism to Yang Shan who, however, burned it after perusal. Later, when Tan Yuan advised Yang Shan to keep the book for himself and not to show it to others, the latter replied, 'After I had read it, I immediately burned it.' Tan Yuan said, 'This Dharma is very difficult to understand and people cannot comprehend it. After the passing of Patriarchs and great Saints, only my last master understood it. Why have you destroyed it?' Yang Shan replied, 'I understood it immediately after my first reading but the book should not be clung to after the Dharma has been in use. If the Venerable Sir wants it back, it will not be difficult for me to write a copy for him.' Thereupon, Yang Shan wrote (from memory) exactly the same book without a single error and handed it to Tan Yuan who said, 'This is exactly the same.'³

One day, as Yang Shan was sitting, a monk came and asked him, 'Do you know written characters?' Yang Shan replied, 'Some.' The monk

1. Although enlightened masters never talked about miracles and supernatural powers lest their disciples might cling to twigs and forget about the fundamental root, they invariably disclosed beforehand the dates of their deaths.

2. The Chinese name of this collection is Shui Yueh Chai Chih Yueh Lu (lit. Water-Moon Studio's Pointing Moon Record), i.e. the Illusory Studio's Register of Pointing at the Moon. Scholars owned studios with poetic names.

3. Yang Shan burned the book because he was apprehensive that people would cling to symbols and neglect their own self-cultivation.

circumambulated the master once from the right, asking him, 'What is this word?' In reply, the master drew a cross on the ground, and the monk made a (reversed) circumambulation from the left, asking, 'What is this word?' The master (by adding arms) turned the cross into a Sauvastika.¹ The monk drew a circle in the air and then pushed with two hands, like an Asura carrying the sun-moon (symbol), asking, 'What is this word?' Yang Shan replied by drawing a circle around the Sauvastika. The monk acted like Vajrapani and the master said, 'Correct!

Correct! All Buddhas bless this." You are doing it and I am doing it also. Take good care of yourself.' Thereupon, the monk bowed his thanks, flew up into the air and left. Five days later, a student who had been present during the monk's visit, asked about the strange visitor. The master replied, 'He is an Arhan in the West and came to probe my Dharma.'³

1. A sauvastika is an averse svastika with its arms turned to the left.

2. Lit. All Buddhas protected and remembered those who supported the Dharma.

3. The above two passages are added here to complete the interesting story of Yang Shan. The first circumambulation from right to left symbolizes the return of function or activity to body and is the monk's question about the Buddha's body, or Buddha-kaya. The cross is the Chinese character 'ten' and is the master's reply meaning: The Buddha's body is the embodiment of ten forms of perfect understanding, ten perfect bodily aspects and ten titles. The second circumambulation from left to right symbolizes the performance of benefirring function and is the monk's question about it. The cross with arms turned to the left is a Sauvastika and is the master's reply meaning that the Buddha's body is endowed with its function of performing myriad moral powers, deeds and Dharmas. The monk's next question, a circle, asked for the meaning of the all-embracing Buddha-nature. The master's reply, a Sauvastika surrounded by a circle, meant that the Buddha-nature is complete with its eternal body and benefirring function. The monk acted like Vajrapani, the Dharrna protecting Bodhisattva, and the master said, 'Your idea of spreading the Dharma is correct because the protection of Dharma is blessed by all Buddhas. You are spreading it and so am I', in other words we are both teaching the Dharma of Mind.